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Questions relating to information

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Rapporteur: Mr. Angel **Angelov** (Bulgaria)

I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its seventy-second session the item entitled "Questions relating to information" and to allocate it to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

2. The Fourth Committee held a general debate on the item at its 14th, 15th and 16th meetings, on 18, 20 and 24 October 2017, and took action on the item at its 16th meeting. Statements and observations made in the course of the Committee's consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records.[1]

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Committee on Information (A/72/21);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/258).

4. At the 14th meeting, on 18 October, the representative of Japan, in his capacity as Rapporteur of the Committee on Information, introduced the report of that Committee.

5. At the same meeting, the Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications made a statement.

[1] A/C.4/72/SR.14, A/C.4/72/SR.15 and A/C.4/72/SR.16.

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II. Consideration of draft resolutions A and B contained in chapter IV of the report of the Committee on Information

6. At its 16th meeting, on 24 October, the Committee had before it draft resolution A, entitled "Information in the service of humanity", and draft resolution B, entitled "United Nations public information policies and activities", contained in chapter IV of the report of the Committee on Information (A/72/21).

7. At the same meeting, the Committee had before it an amendment to draft resolution B (A/C.4/72/L.9).

8. Also at the same meeting, the Committee was informed that the amendment to draft resolution B had been withdrawn by the sponsor.

9. Also at the 16th meeting, the Committee was informed that draft resolutions A and B had no programme budget implications.

10. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolutions A and B without a vote (see para. 11).

III. Recommendations of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

11. The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Questions relating to information

A
Information in the service of humanity

The General Assembly,

Taking note of the comprehensive and important report of the Committee on Information,[1]

Taking note also of the report of the Secretary-General,[2]

Urges all countries, organizations of the United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned, reaffirming their commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to the principles of freedom of the press and freedom of information, as well as to those of the independence, pluralism and diversity of the media, deeply concerned by the disparities existing between developed and developing countries and the consequences of every kind arising from those disparities that affect the capability of the public, private or other media and individuals in developing countries to disseminate information and communicate their views and their cultural and ethical values through endogenous cultural production, as well as to ensure the diversity of sources and their free access to information, and recognizing the call in this context for what in the United Nations and at various international forums has been termed "a new world information and communication order, seen as an evolving and continuous process":

(a) To cooperate and interact with a view to reducing existing disparities in information flows at all levels by increasing assistance for the development of communications infrastructures and capabilities in developing countries, with due regard for their needs and the priorities attached to such areas by those countries, and in order to enable them and the public, private or other media in developing countries to develop their own information and communications policies freely and independently and increase the participation of media and individuals in the communication process, and to ensure a free flow of information at all levels;

(b) To ensure for journalists the free and effective performance of their professional tasks and condemn resolutely all attacks against them;

(c) To provide support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes for broadcasters and journalists from public, private and other media in developing countries;

(d) To enhance regional efforts and cooperation among developing countries, as well as cooperation between developed and developing countries, to strengthen communications capacities and to improve the media infrastructure and

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-second Session, Supplement No. 21* (A/72/21).

[2] A/72/258.

communications technology in developing countries, especially in the areas of training and dissemination of information;

(e) To aim at, in addition to bilateral cooperation, providing all possible support and assistance to developing countries and their media, public, private or other, with due regard to their interests and needs in the field of information and to action already adopted within the United Nations system, including:

(i) The development of the human and technical resources that are indispensable for the improvement of information and communications systems in developing countries and support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes, such as those already operating under both public and private auspices throughout the developing world;

(ii) The creation of conditions that will enable developing countries and their media, public, private or other, to have, by using their national and regional resources, the communications technology suited to their national needs, as well as the necessary programme material, especially for radio and television broadcasting;

(iii) Assistance in establishing and promoting telecommunication links at the subregional, regional and interregional levels, especially among developing countries;

(iv) Facilitation, as appropriate, of access by developing countries to advanced communications technology available on the open market;

(f) To provide full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which should support both public and private media.

B
United Nations public information policies and activities

The General Assembly,

Emphasizing that the Committee on Information is its main subsidiary body mandated to make recommendations to it relating to the work of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat,

Reaffirming its resolution 13 (I) of 13 February 1946, by which the General Assembly established the Department of Public Information, with a view to promoting to the greatest possible extent an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world, and all other relevant resolutions of the Assembly related to the activities of the Department,

Emphasizing that the contents of public information and communications should be placed at the heart of the strategic management of the United Nations and that a culture of communications and transparency should permeate all levels of the Organization as a means of fully informing the peoples of the world of the aims and activities of the United Nations, in accordance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in order to create broad-based global support for the United Nations,

Stressing that the primary mission of the Department of Public Information is to provide, through its outreach activities, accurate, impartial, comprehensive, balanced, timely, relevant and multilingual information to the public on the tasks and responsibilities of the United Nations in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization with the greatest transparency,

Recalling its resolutions 71/101 A and B of 6 December 2016, which provided an opportunity to take due steps to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department of Public Information and to maximize the use of its resources,

Expressing its concern that the gap in information and communications technology between the developed and the developing countries has continued to widen and that vast segments of the population in developing countries are not benefiting from the information and communications technologies that are currently available, and in this regard underlining the necessity of rectifying the imbalances in the present development of and access to information and communications technologies in order to create a more just, equitable, accessible and effective environment in this regard,

Recognizing that developments in information and communications technologies open vast new opportunities for economic growth and social development and can play an important role in the eradication of poverty in developing countries, and at the same time emphasizing that the development of these technologies poses challenges and risks and could lead to the further widening of disparities between and within countries,

Recalling its resolution 69/324 of 11 September 2015 on multilingualism, and emphasizing the importance of making appropriate use of all the official languages of the United Nations in all the activities of the Department of Public Information, including in coordination with other departments of the Secretariat, with the aim of eliminating the disparity between the use of English and the use of the five other official languages, as well as the importance of ensuring the full and equitable treatment of all the official languages of the United Nations in all the activities of the Department,

I
Introduction

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in respect of the public information policies and activities of the United Nations, to continue to implement fully the recommendations contained in relevant resolutions;

2. *Reaffirms* that the United Nations remains the indispensable foundation of a peaceful and just world and that its voice must be heard in a clear and effective manner, and emphasizes the essential role of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat in this context;

3. *Stresses* the importance of the provision of clear, timely, accurate and comprehensive information by the Secretariat to Member States, upon their request, within the framework of existing mandates and procedures;

4. *Also stresses* that Member States should abstain from using information and communications technologies in contravention of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations;

5. *Reaffirms* the central role of the Committee on Information in United Nations public information policies and activities, including the prioritization of those activities, and decides that recommendations relating to the programme of the Department of Public Information shall originate, to the extent possible, in the Committee and shall be considered by the Committee;

6. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, following the priorities for the period 2018-2019 set out by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/6 of 27 October 2016, to pay particular attention to the promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development in accordance with the relevant resolutions of

the Assembly and recent United Nations conferences, the maintenance of international peace and security, the development of Africa, the promotion of human rights, the effective coordination of humanitarian assistance efforts, the promotion of justice and international law, disarmament, and drug control, crime prevention and combating international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations;

7. *Requests* the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to pay particular attention to the outcomes of the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the third International Conference on Financing for Development and the annual Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development follow-up, the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and its follow-up by the annual high-level political forum on sustainable development, the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) and the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, and the progress in implementing their outcomes;

II
General activities of the Department of Public Information

8. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information;[3]

9. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to maintain its commitment to a culture of evaluation and to continue to evaluate its products and activities with the objective of enhancing their effectiveness, and to continue to cooperate and coordinate with Member States and the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the Secretariat;

10. *Reaffirms* the importance of more effective coordination between the Department of Public Information and the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure consistency in the messages of the Organization;

11. *Notes* the efforts of the Department of Public Information to continue to publicize the work and decisions of the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies, and requests the Department to continue to enhance its working relationship with the Office of the President of the General Assembly;

12. *Encourages* continued collaboration between the Department of Public Information and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in the promotion of culture and in the fields of education, the advancement of communication and multilingualism, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 69/324, including through multilingual education, as vehicles for sustainable development using existing resources and bridging the existing gap between the developed and the developing countries;

13. *Notes with appreciation* the efforts of the Department of Public Information to work at the local level with other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to enhance the coordination of their communications activities, urges the Department to encourage the United Nations Communications Group to promote linguistic diversity in its work, and reiterates its request to the

[3] A/AC.198/2017/2, A/AC.198/2017/3 and A/AC.198/2017/4.

Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its fortieth session on progress achieved in this regard;

14. *Reaffirms* that the Department of Public Information must prioritize its work programme, while respecting existing mandates and in line with regulation 5.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation,[4] to focus its message and better concentrate its efforts and to match its programmes with the needs of its target audiences, including the linguistic dimension, on the basis of improved feedback and evaluation mechanisms;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to exert all efforts to ensure that publications and other information services of the Secretariat, including the United Nations website, the United Nations News Service and United Nations social media accounts, contain comprehensive, balanced, objective and equitable information in all official languages about the issues before the Organization and that they maintain editorial independence, impartiality, accuracy and full consistency with resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly;

16. *Underlines* the critical need to address violations of the relevant international rules and regulations that govern the area of broadcasting, including television, radio and satellite broadcasting, in the most appropriate manner;

17. *Reiterates its request* to the Department of Public Information and content-providing offices of the Secretariat to ensure that United Nations publications are produced in all six official languages, as well as in an environmentally friendly and cost-neutral manner, and to continue to coordinate closely with all other entities, including all other departments of the Secretariat and funds and programmes of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, in order to avoid duplication in the issuance of United Nations publications;

18. *Encourages*, in this regard, the Department of Public Information and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management of the Secretariat to develop new collaborative arrangements to enhance multilingualism in other outputs in a cost-neutral manner, bearing in mind the importance of ensuring the full and equitable treatment of all the official languages of the United Nations, and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its fortieth session;

19. *Emphasizes* that the Department of Public Information should maintain and improve its activities in the areas of special interest to developing countries and, where appropriate, other countries with special needs, and that the activities of the Department should contribute to bridging the existing gap between the developing and the developed countries in the crucial field of public information and communications;

20. *Reiterates its growing concern* that the issuance of daily press releases has not been expanded to all official languages, as requested in previous resolutions and in full respect of the principle of parity of all six official languages, recalls the relevant report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information,[5] and reiterates its request that the Department, as a matter of priority, design a strategy to deliver daily press releases in all six official languages through creative schemes, in a cost-neutral manner and in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions, at the latest by the fortieth session of the Committee on Information, and report thereon to the Committee at that session;

[4] ST/SGB/2016/6.

[5] A/AC.198/2017/3.

21. *Notes* recent trends that contribute to undermining credible, transparent and fact-based information, and encourages the Department of Public Information to continue to promote unbiased and impartial information about the work of the United Nations, to identify specific proposals in this regard and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its fortieth session;

Multilingualism and public information

22. *Emphasizes* that multilingualism, as a core value of the Organization, entails the active involvement and commitment of all stakeholders, including all United Nations duty stations and offices away from Headquarters;

23. *Underlines* the responsibility of the Secretariat in the mainstreaming of multilingualism into all of its communication and information activities, within existing resources on an equitable basis, calls upon the Department of Public Information to continue to work with the Coordinator for Multilingualism on best practices throughout the Secretariat to fulfil this responsibility, and requests the Secretary-General to report on such best practices and their implementation in his upcoming report to the Committee on Information;

24. *Emphasizes* the importance of making use of all the official languages of the United Nations, ensuring their full and equitable treatment in all the activities of all divisions and offices of the Department of Public Information with the aim of eliminating the disparity between the use of English and the use of the five other official languages, in this regard reaffirms its request that the Secretary-General ensure that the Department has the necessary capacity in all the official languages to undertake all of its activities, and requests that this aspect be included in future programme budget proposals for the Department, bearing in mind the principle of parity of all six official languages, while respecting the workload in each official language;

25. *Welcomes* the ongoing efforts of the Department of Public Information to enhance multilingualism in all of its activities, stresses the importance of ensuring that the texts of all new public United Nations documents in all six official languages, information materials, global promotional campaigns and all older United Nations documents are made available through the United Nations websites and are accessible to Member States without delay, and further stresses the importance of fully implementing its resolution 69/324;

26. *Encourages* the Department of Public Information to continue its ongoing efforts to incorporate the working method of having thematic focal points, currently applied by the language units of the United Nations websites, as a best practice of multilingualism to improve the quality of the content of the websites;

27. *Also encourages* the Department of Public Information to continue to use other languages in addition to the official languages, when appropriate, according to the target audience, with a view to reaching the widest possible spectrum of audiences and extending the United Nations message to all corners of the world in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization;

Bridging the digital divide

28. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to contribute to raising the awareness of the international community of the importance of the implementation of the outcome documents of the World Summit on the Information Society[6] and of the possibilities that the use of the Internet and other information and communications

[6] See A/C.2/59/3 and A/60/687.

technologies can bring to societies and economies, as well as of ways to bridge the digital divide, including by commemorating World Telecommunication and Information Society Day on 17 May;

Network of United Nations information centres

29. *Emphasizes* the importance of the network of United Nations information centres in enhancing the public image of the United Nations, in disseminating messages on the United Nations to local populations, especially in developing countries, bearing in mind that information in local languages has the strongest impact on local populations, and in mobilizing support for the work of the United Nations at the local level;

30. *Welcomes* the work done by the network of United Nations information centres, including the United Nations Regional Information Centre, in favour of the publication of United Nations information materials and the translation of important documents into languages other than the official languages of the United Nations, encourages information centres to continue their important multilingual activities in the interactive and proactive aspects of their work and to develop web pages in local languages, encourages the Department of Public Information to provide the necessary resources and technical facilities, with a view to reaching the widest possible spectrum of audiences and extending the United Nations message to all corners of the world in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization, and encourages the continuation of efforts in this regard;

31. *Stresses* the importance of rationalizing the network of United Nations information centres, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to continue to make proposals in this direction, including through the redeployment of resources where necessary, and to report to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions;

32. *Reaffirms* that the rationalization of United Nations information centres must be carried out on a case-by-case basis in consultation with all concerned Member States in which existing information centres are located, the countries served by those information centres and other interested countries in the region, taking into consideration the distinctive characteristics of each region;

33. *Recognizes* that the network of United Nations information centres, especially in developing countries, should continue to enhance its impact and activities, including through strategic communications support, and calls upon the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of this approach to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions;

34. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, through the United Nations information centres, to strengthen its cooperation with all other United Nations entities at the country level and in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, in order to enhance coherence in communications and to avoid duplication of work;

35. *Stresses* the importance of taking into account the special needs and requirements of developing countries in the field of information and communications technology for the effective flow of information in those countries;

36. *Also stresses* the importance of efforts to strengthen the outreach activities of the United Nations to those Member States remaining outside the network of United Nations information centres, and encourages the Secretary-General, within the context of rationalization, to extend the services of the network of information centres to those Member States;

37. *Further stresses* that the Department of Public Information should continue to review the allocation of both staff and financial resources to the United Nations information centres in developing countries, taking into account the specific needs of the least developed countries in this regard, and requests the Secretary-General to include in the next report comprehensive information on the functioning of the United Nations information centres, including the outcome of the review of the effective and efficient allocation of staff and financial resources to United Nations information centres and the possible measures to improve the operation of the centres in developing countries;

38. *Welcomes* the support of some Member States, including developing countries, in offering, inter alia, rent-free premises for the United Nations information centres because of lack of funding, bearing in mind that such support should not be a substitute for the full allocation of financial resources for the information centres in the context of the programme budget of the United Nations;

39. *Notes* the concern of many Member States regarding the measures taken by the Secretariat in relation to the information centres in Mexico City, Pretoria and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, expresses the hope that these measures will not have an adverse impact on the ability of the centres to act as bridges between the United Nations and local audiences, and therefore requests the Secretary-General to report on the impact of these measures and to explore ways to strengthen the United Nations information centres in Cairo, Mexico City, Pretoria and Rio de Janeiro, keeping in mind the need to do so within existing resources, and encourages the Secretary-General to explore the strengthening of other centres, especially in Africa, in cooperation with the Member States concerned and in a cost-neutral manner;

40. *Recalls* its resolution 64/243 of 24 December 2009, in which the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations information centre in Luanda as a contribution towards addressing the needs of Portuguese-speaking African countries, and requests the Secretary-General, in coordination with the Government of Angola, to accelerate the establishment of the information centre and report on the operationalization of the centre to the Committee on Information at its fortieth session;

41. *Takes note with appreciation* of the offer made by the Government of the Republic of Korea to host a United Nations information centre and, noting the report by the Secretary-General to the Committee on Information on the feasibility of the acceptance of such an offer in a cost-effective manner, requests the Department of Public Information to continue its consultation with the Government of the Republic of Korea in this regard;

III
Strategic communications services

42. *Reaffirms* the role of the strategic communications services in devising and disseminating United Nations messages by developing communications strategies, with the overall emphasis on multilingualism from the planning stage, in close collaboration with the substantive departments, United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, in full compliance with their legislative mandates;

Promotional campaigns

43. *Notes with appreciation* the work of the Department of Public Information in promoting, through its campaigns, issues of importance to the international community, and requests the Department, in cooperation with the countries concerned and with the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, to continue to take appropriate measures to enhance world public awareness on, inter

alia, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[7] United Nations reform, the eradication of poverty, sustainable urban development, conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, conflict prevention, peacekeeping, sustaining peace, peacebuilding, refugees and migrants, culture and development, disarmament, decolonization, human rights, including the rights of women and children, persons with disabilities and migrant workers, strategic coordination in humanitarian relief, especially in natural disasters and other crises, communicable and non-communicable diseases, the needs of the African continent, the nature of the critical economic and social situation in Africa and the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development,[8] the special needs of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, the importance of international cooperation to combat illicit financial flows and the activities that underlie them, such as corruption, embezzlement, fraud, tax evasion, safe havens that create incentives for the transfer abroad of stolen assets, money-laundering and illegal exploitation of natural resources, the identification, freezing and recovery of stolen assets and their return to their countries of origin in a manner consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption,[9] survivors of human trafficking, survivors of modern slavery, combating transnational illicit trafficking, including in cultural heritage, the permanent memorial to the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, the initiative on a world against violence and violent extremism, dialogue among civilizations, the culture of peace and tolerance and the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, as well as prevention of genocide;

44. *Requests* the Secretariat, especially the Department of Public Information, to contribute to the observance of International Mother Language Day, on 21 February, as proclaimed by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Day of Nowruz, on 21 March, the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, on 25 March, World Cities Day, on 31 October, World Oceans Day, on 8 June, International Mountain Day, on 11 December, Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day, on 27 June, Sustainable Gastronomy Day, on 18 June, the International Day for Tolerance, on 16 November, the International Day of Happiness, on 20 March, the International Day of Non-Violence, on 2 October, International Youth Day, on 12 August, the International Day of Peace, on 21 September, World Press Freedom Day, on 3 May, the Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation for Those Who Lost Their Lives During the Second World War, on 8 and 9 May, the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, on 27 January, the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, on 19 June, Nelson Mandela International Day, on 18 July, the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, on 26 September, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, on 29 November, the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime, on 9 December, and Human Rights Day, on 10 December, and to play a role in raising awareness and promoting these events in a cost-neutral manner, where appropriate, in accordance with the respective General Assembly resolutions;

45. *Requests* the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to raise broad awareness and to engage in a comprehensive and multilingual promotional campaign and coverage, on an equal

[7] Resolution 70/1.
[8] A/57/304, annex.
[9] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2349, No. 42146.

basis, of all summits, international conferences and high-level meetings mandated by the General Assembly, including those to be held in 2017;

46. *Recognizes* the communication efforts led by the Department of Public Information in promoting the review conferences of the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and their preparatory processes, as well as before, during and after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular the production of various multimedia materials, including videos, images and graphics, to promote the summit and the issues before it in the six official languages of the Organization, and in this regard encourages the Department to continue this practice in promoting high-level meetings, including through the use of traditional and new media such as social media, as appropriate;

47. *Also recognizes* the efforts of the Department of Public Information in communicating about and promoting the signing ceremony for the Paris Agreement,[10] held in New York on 22 April 2016, and the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 7 to 18 November 2016, and in this regard encourages the Department to engage in a comprehensive promotional campaign in preparation for the next Conference of the Parties, to be held in Bonn, Germany, and to be chaired by Fiji;

48. *Further recognizes* the communication efforts led by the Department of Public Information in promoting the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) and its preparatory process, in particular by sending a multilingual team to ensure its coverage and organizing a workshop on the New Urban Agenda[11] for indigenous communities, as well as the production of material suitable for local governments and relevant stakeholders;

49. *Requests* the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to continue raising awareness of and to disseminate information, in a cost-neutral manner, on the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, declared by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/119 of 10 December 2010;

50. *Recalls* its resolutions 68/237 of 23 December 2013 and 69/16 of 18 November 2014 on the International Decade for People of African Descent, and requests the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to continue raising awareness of and to disseminate information on the International Decade, in accordance with the programme for the implementation of the International Decade adopted by the General Assembly, in a cost-neutral manner;

51. *Underlines* the importance of the Department of Public Information integrating multilingualism in the planning and implementation of promotional campaigns, including the design of logotypes and isologotypes in different languages, where appropriate, as well as the use of hashtags for social media campaigns in more than one language, taking into account the needs of the target audiences;

52. *Encourages* the Department of Public Information to develop partnerships with the private sector and relevant organizations that promote the official languages of the United Nations and other languages, as appropriate, in order to promote the activities of the United Nations in a cost-neutral manner, and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its fortieth session, and in this regard welcomes the

[10] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

[11] Resolution 71/256, annex.

partnership with airlines that provide to their customers in-flight programmes featuring United Nations activities;

Role of the Department of Public Information in United Nations peacekeeping operations, special political missions and peacebuilding

53. *Requests* the Secretariat to continue to ensure the active involvement of the Department of Public Information from the planning stage and in all stages of future peacekeeping operations and special political missions through interdepartmental consultations and coordination with other departments and offices of the Secretariat, in particular with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, the Department of Political Affairs and the Peacebuilding Support Office;

54. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, the Department of Political Affairs and the Peacebuilding Support Office to continue their cooperation in raising awareness of the new realities, successes and challenges faced by peacekeeping operations, especially multidimensional and complex ones, in peacebuilding efforts and by special political missions, and continues to call upon them to develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy on current challenges facing United Nations peacekeeping, countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission and special political missions;

55. *Stresses* the importance of enhancing the public information capacity of the Department of Public Information in the field of peacekeeping operations and special political missions as well as its role, in close cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Political Affairs, in the process of selecting public information staff for United Nations peacekeeping operations or missions, and in this regard invites the Department of Public Information to second public information staff who have the skills necessary to fulfil the tasks of the operations and special political missions, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical distribution in accordance with Chapter XV, Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter, and to consider views expressed, especially by host countries, when appropriate, in this regard;

56. *Emphasizes* the importance of the peacekeeping gateway on the United Nations website, and requests the Department of Public Information to continue its efforts to support the peacekeeping missions in further developing and maintaining their websites;

57. *Recalls* its resolutions 62/214 of 21 December 2007 on the United Nations Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Staff and Related Personnel, 70/268 of 14 June 2016 on the comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects, 70/286 of 17 June 2016 on cross-cutting issues, 71/134 of 13 December 2016 on criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission and 71/278 of 10 March 2017 on United Nations action on sexual exploitation and abuse, takes note of the report of the Secretary-General[12] and Security Council resolutions 2242 (2015) of 13 October 2015 and 2272 (2016) of 11 March 2016, requests the Department of Public Information, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, the Department of Political Affairs and the Peacebuilding Support Office to continue to cooperate in implementing an effective outreach programme to explain the zero-tolerance policy of the Organization regarding sexual exploitation and abuse in accordance with the objectives set out in

[12] A/71/818 and A/71/818/Corr.1 and A/71/818/Add.1.

the aforementioned resolutions and to inform the public of the outcome of all such cases involving United Nations staff and related personnel, including cases where allegations are ultimately found to be legally unproven, and requests the Departments and the Office to inform the public of steps taken to protect the rights of the victims and ensure adequate support for the witnesses, in accordance with the United Nations Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Staff and Related Personnel;

58. *Notes* the importance of communication activities and the dissemination of information relating to sustaining peace and peacebuilding efforts, in particular, meetings and activities of the Peacebuilding Commission, country-specific configurations, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund, and requests the Department of Public Information to enhance its cooperation with these entities in that regard, in particular through increased usage of social media, with a view to widening outreach of their important work and encouraging national ownership;

Role of the Department of Public Information in strengthening dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace as means of enhancing understanding among nations

59. *Recalls* its resolutions on dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace, and requests the Department of Public Information, while ensuring the pertinence and relevance of subjects for promotional campaigns on this issue, to continue to provide the support necessary for the dissemination of information pertaining to dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace, as well as the initiative on the Alliance of Civilizations, and to take due steps in fostering the culture of dialogue among civilizations, promoting the initiative on a world against violence and violent extremism in accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/109 of 10 December 2015, and promoting cultural understanding, tolerance, respect for and freedom of religion or belief and effective enjoyment by all of all human rights and civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development, and requests a briefing by the Secretariat on the measures taken to disseminate information pertaining to the dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace, before the next session of the Committee on Information;

60. *Invites* the United Nations system, especially the Department of Public Information, to continue to encourage and facilitate dialogue among civilizations and to formulate ways and means to promote dialogue among civilizations in the activities of the United Nations in various fields, taking into account the Programme of Action of the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations,[13] and in this regard reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session the report requested by the Assembly in its resolution 60/4 of 20 October 2005;

61. *Recalls* its resolution 64/14 of 10 November 2009, in which it acknowledged the achievements of the Alliance of Civilizations and the efforts of the High Representative of the Secretary-General for the Alliance of Civilizations, and welcomes the discussion, at the sixth Alliance of Civilizations Forum, held in Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia, on 29 and 30 August 2014, on strategic and practical measures that generate and sustain common values and a shared sense of responsibility among all stakeholders, and the continuing support of the Department of Public Information for the work of the Alliance of Civilizations, including its ongoing projects;

[13] Resolution 56/6, sect. B.

IV
News services

62. *Stresses* that the central objective of the news services implemented by the Department of Public Information is the timely delivery of accurate, objective and balanced news and information emanating from the United Nations system in all mass media, including print, radio, television and the Internet, including social media platforms, to the media and other audiences worldwide, with the overall emphasis on multilingualism from the planning stage, and reiterates its request to the Department to ensure that all breaking news stories and news alerts are accurate, impartial and free of bias;

63. *Recognizes* the important role of television and video services provided by the Department of Public Information, and notes the recent efforts in making available online broadcast-quality video that can be streamed or downloaded by smaller broadcast outlets that do not have access to satellite feeds;

Traditional means of communication

64. *Welcomes* the sustained efforts of United Nations Radio, which remains one of the most effective and far-reaching traditional media available to the Department of Public Information and an important instrument in United Nations activities, to enhance the timeliness, presentation and thematic focus of its multilingual programmes on United Nations activities and to ensure the widest possible dissemination of its programming to media outlets using the most suitable platforms and formats, pre-recorded or live, requests the Secretary-General to continue to make every effort to achieve parity in the six official languages in United Nations Radio productions, reiterates the important role of the 15-minute daily programmes created pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/82 B of 6 December 1999, and requests the Department to continue producing and disseminating the programmes, in accordance with client needs;

65. *Also welcomes* the ongoing efforts being made by the Department of Public Information to disseminate programmes directly to broadcasting stations all over the world in the six official languages, with the addition of Portuguese and Kiswahili as well as other languages where possible, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to include in his upcoming report to the Committee on Information detailed information about such partnerships with broadcasting stations as well as statistics about their multiplying impacts on potential audiences;

66. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to continue to build partnerships with local, national and regional broadcasters to extend the United Nations message to all corners of the world in an accurate and impartial way, and requests the News and Media Division of the Department to continue to take full advantage of modern technologies and equipment;

67. *Welcomes* the completion of an inventory of 67 years of United Nations audiovisual history and, recognizing the importance of the audiovisual archives of the United Nations, stresses the urgency of digitization in order to prevent further deterioration of these unique historical archives, encourages the Department of Public Information to prioritize the development of collaborative arrangements for the digitization of these archives while preserving their multilingual character, in a cost-neutral manner, and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its fortieth session, and welcomes the contribution of Oman[14] in this regard;

[14] See A/AC.198/2017/3.

68. *Notes*, in this regard, the proposed strategy for the digitization of the United Nations audiovisual archive materials for long-term preservation, access and sustainable management,[15] and requests the Department of Public Information to submit for consideration by the relevant bodies both a detailed proposal for the mass digitization of the audiovisual collections, within existing resources, and plans to solicit voluntary contributions to fund the digitization and storage of the audiovisual archives;

United Nations website

69. *Reaffirms* that the United Nations website is an essential tool for Member States and for the general public, the media, non-governmental organizations and educational institutions, and in this regard reiterates the continued need for strengthened efforts by the Department of Public Information to regularly maintain, update and improve it;

70. *Recognizes* the potential of United Nations websites to offer multilingual and multimedia content, integrating written, spoken and visual elements in all of the official languages, and encourages the Department of Public Information to work towards such an objective;

71. *Also recognizes* the efforts made by the Secretariat to implement the basic accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities to gain access to and take part in the work of the United Nations in person or online, including through the work of the Accessibility Centre at United Nations Headquarters, calls upon the Department of Public Information to continue to work towards compliance with accessibility requirements on all new and updated pages of the website, with the aim of ensuring its accessibility for persons with different kinds of disabilities, and in this regard encourages the Department of Public Information and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management to further cooperate and identify potential synergies;

72. *Reaffirms* the need to achieve full parity among the six official languages on all United Nations websites, and urges the Secretary-General to strengthen his efforts to develop, maintain and update multilingual United Nations websites and the web page of the Secretary-General in all the official languages of the United Nations, from within existing resources and on an equitable basis;

73. *Notes with concern* that the multilingual development and enrichment of the United Nations website in certain official languages has improved at a much slower rate than expected, and in this regard urges the Department of Public Information, in coordination with content-providing offices, to advance actions taken to achieve full parity among the six official languages on the United Nations website;

74. *Recalls* paragraph 32 of its resolution 69/324, notes with concern the disparity between the English and the non-English languages on the websites maintained by the Secretariat, urges the Secretary-General to lead the efforts of all offices and departments of the Secretariat to take concrete action to address such uneven development, and in this regard calls upon all stakeholders, including the Department of Public Information, content-providing offices and departments, in particular the Office of Information and Communications Technology of the Secretariat, to continue their collaboration, within their respective mandates, so as to achieve full parity among the six official languages on all United Nations websites developed and maintained by all Secretariat entities, in full conformity with the principles of multilingualism and in compliance with the relevant resolutions addressing multilingualism and accessibility for persons with disabilities, by making

[15] A/AC.198/2014/3, annex.

every effort to translate materials currently available only in English and by providing offices and departments with technological solutions that comply with the principle of parity, from within existing resources;

75. *Reaffirms its request* to the Secretary-General to ensure, while maintaining an up-to-date and accurate website, the equitable distribution among all official languages of financial and human resources within the Department of Public Information allocated to the United Nations website, with full respect for the needs and the specificities of all six official languages;

76. *Welcomes* the cooperative arrangements undertaken by the Department of Public Information with academic institutions to increase the number of web pages available in official and non-official languages, and requests the Secretary-General, in coordination with content-providing offices, to extend such cooperative arrangements, in a cost-effective manner, to all the official languages of the United Nations, bearing in mind the necessity of adherence to United Nations standards and guidelines;

77. *Encourages* the continuation of live webcasts of public meetings of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and their respective subsidiary bodies, as well as of the Security Council, with interpretation services, and requests the Secretariat to make every effort to provide full access to archived videos in all official languages of all past open formal United Nations meetings with interpretation services, in strict observance of the principle of full parity of the six official languages of the United Nations, to promote transparency and accountability within the Organization;

78. *Reaffirms* the need to enhance the technological infrastructure of the Department of Public Information, including the United Nations information centres on a continuous basis in order to widen the outreach of the Department and to continue to improve the United Nations website in a cost-neutral manner;

79. *Encourages* the Department of Public Information, in collaboration with the Office of Information and Communications Technology, to continue its efforts to ensure that technological infrastructures and supportive applications in the United Nations fully support Latin, non-Latin and bidirectional scripts in order to enhance the equality of all official languages on the United Nations website;

80. *Underlines* the importance, in the implementation of new communication tools such as social networks, of taking into account the linguistic dimension in order to ensure full parity among the official languages of the Organization, and in that regard stresses the need for United Nations social media campaigns to use hashtags suitable for each language;

81. *Recalls* that, in paragraph 28 of its resolution 69/324, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to include in his upcoming report on multilingualism a comprehensive review of the United Nations websites, presenting the status of content in non-official languages, as well as identifying innovative ideas, potential synergies and other cost-neutral measures to reinforce the broader multilingual development and enrichment of the United Nations websites, as appropriate;

82. *Notes* the uneven development of social media among the official languages of the United Nations, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its fortieth session on the strategy of the Department of Public Information to ensure, by a more balanced use of all six official languages, that social media contribute to raising awareness of and support for the activities of the Organization, and to include in the report available analytics, classified by official language, on audiences of social media accounts managed by the Secretariat;

V
Library services

83. *Welcomes* the efforts of the Department of Public Information to implement the recommendations of its 2011 working group on library improvement;

84. *Commends* the steps taken by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and the other member libraries of the Steering Committee for the Modernization and Integrated Management of United Nations Libraries to align their activities, services and outputs more closely with the goals, objectives and operational priorities of the Organization, and calls upon the Dag Hammarskjöld Library to work with the other member libraries to devise a new statement of strategy for library services and to replace the former Steering Committee with the Steering Committee for Libraries of the United Nations focused on practical cooperation among the library services;

85. *Reiterates* the need to maintain a multilingual collection of books, periodicals and other materials in both hard copy and electronic formats, accessible to Member States and others, ensuring that the Dag Hammarskjöld Library continues to be a broadly accessible resource for information about the United Nations and its activities, including through a multilingual home page, from within existing resources;

86. *Welcomes* the initiatives taken by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, in its capacity as the focal point, to expand the scope of the regional training and knowledge-sharing workshops organized for the depository libraries in developing countries to include outreach in their activities;

87. *Acknowledges* the role of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library in enhancing knowledge-sharing and networking activities to ensure access to the vast store of United Nations knowledge for delegates, permanent missions of Member States, the Secretariat, researchers and depository libraries worldwide;

88. *Notes* the efforts of the United Nations intranet and iSeek team to raise awareness among staff members of new initiatives and developments in different departments of the Secretariat, and requests the Department of Public Information, as a matter of priority and in the spirit of synergies and efficiency, to study ways of integrating the Member States' deleGATE portal into the iSeek platform for more efficient and effective sharing of information with Member States, and to report to the Committee on Information on this issue at its fortieth session;

VI
Outreach services

89. *Stresses* that the central objective of the outreach and knowledge services implemented by the Department of Public Information is to promote awareness of the role and work of the United Nations by fostering dialogue with global constituencies, such as academia, civil society, educators, students and youth, with the overall emphasis on multilingualism from the planning stage, in close collaboration with the substantive departments, specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations;

90. *Notes with serious concern* that many outreach and knowledge services are not yet available in all official languages, and in this regard urges the Department of Public Information, as a matter of priority, to mainstream multilingualism into all outreach and knowledge services, bearing in mind the importance of making use of all the official languages of the United Nations and ensuring their full and equitable treatment in all the activities of the Department, with the aim of eliminating the disparity between the use of English and the use of the five other official languages;

91. *Encourages* the United Nations Academic Impact to take effective steps to facilitate exchanges between the United Nations and institutions of higher education and academic, research and scientific communities, in all regions to support the common principles and purposes of the United Nations, contribute to the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, foster global citizenship and fill knowledge gaps, while recognizing the role of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and its constitution;

92. *Notes* the continued growth of the United Nations Academic Impact, calls upon the Department of Public Information to promote global awareness of the Academic Impact in order to encourage balanced participation among Member States and their continued support for the initiative, within existing resources, and encourages Member States to promote the initiative among their academic institutions, as appropriate, with a view to their joining it, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 70/93 A and B of 9 December 2015;

93. *Welcomes* the educational outreach activities of the Department of Public Information, and requests the Department to continue to reach educators and young people worldwide through a range of multilingual multimedia platforms including, in particular, in the dissemination of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the educational system, including elementary schools;

94. *Commends* the United Nations Academic Impact for its continued engagement with the global community of scholarship in realizing the objectives of the Organization, requests the Secretary-General to continue to promote this initiative by encouraging eligible institutions of higher education in all regions, especially from developing countries, to enrol and contribute actively to the goals of the United Nations, and in this regard notes with appreciation the cost-neutral partnerships it has successfully initiated thus far with a view to multiplying membership;

95. *Emphasizes* the importance of the continued implementation by the Department of Public Information of the ongoing Reham Al-Farra Memorial Journalists' Fellowship Programme for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, as mandated by the General Assembly, and requests the Department to consider how best to maximize the benefits derived from the Programme by extending, inter alia, its duration and the number of its participants;

96. *Encourages* the Department of Public Information to make the *UN Chronicle* available in paperless editions only, with a view to expanding the service to all six official languages within existing resources, and requests the Department to report to the Committee on Information at its fortieth session on progress in this matter;

97. *Welcomes* the movement towards educational outreach and the orientation of the *UN Chronicle*, and to this end encourages the *UN Chronicle* to continue to develop partnerships and collaborative educational activities and events with civil society organizations and institutions of higher learning;

98. *Acknowledges* the importance of the *Yearbook of the United Nations* as an authoritative reference work, and welcomes the work of the Department of Public Information in expanding the content and the functions of the website of the *Yearbook*;

99. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to ensure that, in view of their income-generating nature, guided tours at United Nations Headquarters are consistently available in all six official languages of the United Nations as well as in non-official languages;

100. *Notes* the ongoing efforts of the Department of Public Information to strengthen its role as a focal point for two-way interaction with civil society relating to the priorities and concerns of the Organization identified by Member States, and also notes in this regard the increasing involvement of civil society in United Nations activities, including the outreach activities directed at youth representatives and young journalists;

101. *Recalls* its resolution 41/68 D of 3 December 1986, commends the World Federation of United Nations Associations and its more than 100 national United Nations associations for the valuable contributions that they have made during the past 71 years through their global activities in the mobilization of popular support for the United Nations, and calls for continued collaboration between the World Federation and the Department of Public Information in support of their complementary objectives;

102. *Commends*, in a spirit of cooperation, the United Nations Correspondents Association for its ongoing activities and for its Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Scholarship Fund, which sponsors journalists from developing countries to come to United Nations Headquarters and report on the activities during the sessions of the General Assembly, and further encourages the international community to continue its financial support for the Fund;

103. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts and contribution of United Nations Messengers of Peace, Goodwill Ambassadors and other advocates to promote the work of the United Nations and to enhance international public awareness of its priorities and concerns, and calls upon the Department of Public Information to continue to involve them in its global communications and media strategies and outreach activities;

VII
Final remarks

104. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its fortieth session and to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session on the activities of the Department of Public Information and on the implementation of all recommendations and requests contained in the present resolution and requests the Department of Public Information to provide a briefing in this regard, before the next session of the Committee on Information;

105. *Notes* the initiative taken by the Department of Public Information, in cooperation with the Department of Safety and Security and the Protocol and Liaison Service of the Secretariat, during the annual general debate of the General Assembly, to issue special identification stickers to mission-designated personnel of Member States to enable them to escort media covering the visits of high-level officials to restricted areas, and strongly urges the Secretary-General to continue to improve this practice by acceding to the request by Member States to provide the needed number of additional passes to press and other relevant officers of Member States to allow their access to all areas that are deemed restricted, in order to effectively and comprehensively report on high-level meetings that include officials of delegations of Member States;

106. *Requests* the Committee on Information to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session;

107. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-third session the item entitled "Questions relating to information".